

The Digital Cinema Media Awards 2026



Introduction

The Digital Cinema Media Awards, presented in partnership with *Campaign*, are back for 2026. This year we are celebrating the tenth edition of the event!

Honouring cinema's most exceptional advertising campaigns, the Awards offer brands and professionals a chance to have their talent, strategy and creative work recognised on the industry's most prestigious stage.

Entrants have six main categories to choose from, with an additional Grand Prix awarded for the overall winner. The categories reflect the diverse impact that the medium can achieve for brands by seamlessly integrating themselves into the entire cinema experience through strategic partnerships and immersive experiences.

Key Dates

Entry deadline:	Friday 24 July
Extended Entry deadline:	Friday 7 August
Judging day:	Thursday 17 September
Awards ceremony:	Thursday 8 October

How To Enter

Please submit your award entries here : <https://dcm.awardsplatform.com>.

The Digital Cinema Media Awards are free to enter, and entries can be saved as drafts before submission. Campaigns may be entered into multiple categories.

Prizes

Prizes include: A cinema screen time campaign to the value of £100,000*, a pair of red-carpet cinema premiere tickets, exclusive hire of the DCM screening room, and cinema tickets.

**To be used in Q1 2027. No barter. Production not included. Limited to 30" copy. All subject to DCM approval.*

The Judges

Chaired by Maisie McCabe, UK Editor, Campaign, this year's judging panel of esteemed industry experts includes:

- Davina Barker, Chief Revenue Officer, Digital Cinema Media
- Genna Trentham, Client Managing Director, Spark Foundry
- James Bailey, CEO Media UK&I, Dentsu
- Jem Lloyd-Williams, President, Mindshare and CSO, WPP Media
- Jenny Biggam, Founder, the7stars
- Jon Stevens, WPP Media President, Wavemaker
- Karen Stacey, CEO, Digital Cinema Media
- Katie Lee, CEO, Starcom UK
- Patrick Affleck, CEO, Havas Media Network
- Paul Knight, CEO, PHD UK
- Rachel Peace, UK Managing Director, Hearts & Science
- Sarah Nugent, CEO, UM London
- Will Spence, CEO UK&I, Initiative

Award Categories

Six categories are open for entry. A Grand Prix winner will also be chosen by the judging panel solely from the winners of the five main entry categories (which excludes Cinema Champion of the Year). Entries to categories 1-4 must have been exhibited in a DCM cinema within the judging period of August 2025 to July 2026.

To mark the tenth edition of the Digital Cinema Media Awards, we are also introducing an exclusive category for this year only: the 'Cinema Campaign of the Decade' award, inviting the industry to select its favourite from the past nine Grand Prix winners.

Details of this year's categories are as follows:

- Best Use of Cinema (Small)
- Best Use of Cinema (Large)
- Best Creative Use of Cinema
- **[NEW]** Excellence in Cinema Effectiveness
- Best Long-Term Use of Cinema
- Cinema Champion of the Year
- **[NEW]** Cinema Campaign of the Decade

Please see category details below. There will be additional entry criteria on the platform that must be followed, which will help guide submissions.

1. Best Use of Cinema (Small)

This category recognises campaigns under £250,000 (DCM ratecard) that demonstrate exceptional strategic utilisation of cinema.

In addition to impactful big screen advertising, entries may include campaigns that effectively leverage the high-attention medium to launch a new product, campaign, or message. Strategic use of tools and data such as DCM's Cinemapper and Cinema Effectiveness Roadmap is encouraged.

Entries should provide evidence of the impact cinema had on the overall campaign and its essential role in the AV media mix, highlighting the influence of the cinema medium on overall outcomes.

2. Best Use of Cinema (Large)

This category acknowledges campaigns exceeding £250,000 (DCM ratecard) that showcase exemplary strategic utilisation of cinema.

In addition to impactful big screen advertising, cinema should have played a prominent role in the AV mix. This could entail initiating the campaign with cinema to introduce a new product, campaign, or message, as well as incorporating bespoke idents, activations, and partnerships.

The campaign should have been strategically informed by research, data, and planning tools, showcasing tangible evidence of how cinema contributed to the campaign's overall success.

3. Best Creative Use of Cinema

This category honours campaigns showcasing innovative thinking and clever utilisation of new ideas within the cinema medium to deliver tangible results for advertisers.

Campaigns should strategically leverage the immersive and creative opportunities unique to cinema, which may encompass daring cinema-specific copy, 4DX and Screen X experiences, bespoke idents, and on-site activations.

Entries should demonstrate innovative communication planning, highlight cinema's pivotal role within the broader AV mix, and illustrate its specific contribution to the campaign's overall success.

4. [New] Excellence in Cinema Effectiveness

This category recognises campaigns that demonstrate outstanding effectiveness in cinema advertising.

Entries should demonstrate how an insight-led media strategy, strategic cinema planning and measurement best practice delivered measurable brand and financial outcomes that can be specifically attributed to cinema.

Submissions must show a strong understanding of the target audience and market context and highlight the intelligent use of data and measurement tools throughout the campaign lifecycle. These can include integrating location data, brand uplift studies and Market Mix Modelling (MMM) analysis.

Results must clearly demonstrate how cinema specifically enhanced overall campaign effectiveness. Entries that focus only on total media performance, without explicitly attributing impact to cinema, will not be considered.

5. Best Long-Term Use of Cinema

This category honours brands that exhibit a sustained commitment to the cinema medium as a core element of their brand strategy.

Entries should showcase how insights and strategic planning have been employed to leverage the power of cinema for brand-building purposes over an extended period. This may involve running multiple campaign bursts as part of a long-term advertising strategy or executing multiple campaigns over a minimum period of 12 months.

6. Cinema Champion of the Year

This category celebrates individuals or teams that demonstrate excellence in advocating for the power of cinema in the brands they represent.

Entries should showcase a proven track record of increasing awareness of cinema's pivotal role within the AV media mix, achieving exceptional results through cinema advertising, and persuading clients to prioritise cinema in their marketing strategies.

This category welcomes entries from any individual or team within a media agency.

7. [New] Cinema Campaign of the Decade

To mark the tenth edition of the Digital Cinema Media Awards, this category invites the industry to select its favourite from the past nine Grand Prix winners.

This award celebrates the campaign that continues to resonate most strongly with audiences and the industry, recognising enduring creativity, impact, and the power of cinema as an advertising medium.

All previous Grand Prix-winning campaigns will be eligible. The winner will be determined by a public vote, open from 19 May to 7 August, with all details found at www.dcm.co.uk/awards/campaignofthedecade

Entry Deliverables

Entries must be no more than 1,000 words in total. Each entry should include an executive summary of no more than 250 words, which does not count as part of the 1,000 words for the entry.

Please upload two high resolution images to support your entry. A supporting video must also be submitted, as either a .mp4 file, or a YouTube or Vimeo link.

All entries must be submitted at dcm.awardsplatform.com.

Entries for Best Use of Cinema (Small), Best Use of Cinema (Large) and Best Creative Use of Cinema must be structured around the headings of: **Background, Idea, Plan, Results**.

Entries for Excellence in Cinema Effectiveness must be structured around the headings of: **Background, Idea, Media & Measurement Plan, Results**.

Entries for Best Long-Term Use of Cinema must be structured around the headings of: **Background, Strategy, Highlight Campaign Example, Results**.

Cinema Champion of the Year - Entry Deliverables

Entries for Cinema Champion of the Year must include an explanation of why the individual or team should win this award, in no more than 500 words. Entries must be structured around the headings of: **Smart media-planning, Creative Solutions, Results**.

In addition, the entry should also include a testimonial from a peer, senior member of staff or client, in no more than 100 words.

Please upload a high-resolution headshot image of yourself to support your entry.

Publicity

Digital Cinema Media and *Campaign* reserve the right to use the name, company and details of the winner and their photographs in any publicity and to publish winning entries online and in the DCM Awards brochure.

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